The Berg Family Story

Mrs. Berg came to see her counselor in a state of depression. She located the onset of her distress in her daughter’s recent departure from home to stay with a favorite aunt and her family some 500 kilometers away. The move was intended as a time-out strategy in countering a run-away escalation of family stress at home. Mrs. Berg had been the main impetus in getting her 16-year-old daughter out of the house – something that now flooded her with feelings of guilt and regret.

The mother-daughter relationship had been severely conflicted for at least the last two years. A recurring memory of an especially ugly fight on the eve of her daughter’s departure, had become an obsession in the mother’s mind. In sharp contrast, her husband could look back on a largely pleasant, often playful, relationship with his daughter. The mother was left isolated and resentful in losing a daughter from whom she felt now separated not only relationally but also geographically. She was grieving a double loss, both stemming from her sense of failure as a parent.

**Their classification table lists six stages of the family life cycle:**

1. Leaving home: single young adults

2. The joining of families through marriage: the new couple

3. Families with young children

4. Families with adolescents

5. Launching children and moving on

6. Families in middle life

**Each of these life cycle stages is correlated with two major dimensions:**

1. Emotional Process of Transition: Key Principles.

2. Second-Order Changes in Family Status Required to Proceed Developmentally.

1. Look at the chart and identify which stage this family is at, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the emotional process of transition \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are the second order changes in family status are required to proceed successfully to the next stage.

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